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## SOCIETIES

## THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE WESTERN PHILOSOPHICAL ASSOCIATION

IN accordance with the action of the executive committee, the Western Philosophical Association held its eighteenth annual meeting at Northwestern University, Evanston, Ill., on March 29 and 30, 1918. Both the attendance and the interest manifested clearly testified to the wisdom of the decision to hold the regular meeting this year as usual and to provide place on the programme for papers on any subjects which members might wish to discuss. Of the Friday sessions, that of the morning was devoted primarily to ethical topics and that of the afternoon to papers relating to various phases of social reconstruction. In continuation of the afternoon's discussions and as the climax of the day's programme came the presidential address by Professor H. B. Alexander on the subject, "Art and the Democracy." This address was delivered in the Evanston Hotel in connection with a dinner and a smoker at which the members and visiting friends were the guests of Northwestern University. The morning of Saturday, following a breakfast at the home of the secretary, was devoted to four papers on logical and epistemological subjects and to the annual business meeting.

The association resolved that a committee be appointed to communicate to the American Philosophical Association a definite plan of federation of American philosophical associations, and to formulate an alternative plan (involving a change of name) for the reorganization of the Western Philosophical Association, to be submitted at the next annual meeting, in case the American Philosophical Association refuses federation; further, that the committee to handle this matter be composed of five members of the association, the retiring president, the secretary, Professor Tufts and two others to be agreed upon by them.

Action was taken whereby, beginning with 1919, membership in the association lapses automatically whenever the regular dues are unpaid for a period of three years.

The report of the Secretary and Treasurer indicated a membership of eighty-two, an expenditure for postage and printing during the year of \$12.86 with one item of \$9.00 as yet unpaid, and a balance in the savings and checking accounts of \$224.78. His requests for an authorization to invest in war savings certificates the money not needed for running expenses and for a committee to audit the accounts of the past two years and to report at the next meeting were acted upon favorably. Professors Ames and H. W. Wright were appointed as such a committee.

Elected to membership were: A. E. Avey, A. P. Brogan, G. W. Cunningham, L. R. Eckardt, D. T. Howard, J. A. Leighton, S. G. Martin, J. D. Stoops. Officers were elected as follows: President, H. W. Wright; Vice-president, E. S. Ames; Secretary and Treasurer, E. L. Schaub; additional members of the executive committee, J. F. Crawford, A. H. Lloyd, E. D. Starbuck, Norman Wilde.

Iowa City, Iowa, was determined upon as the place for the next meeting, the time of which was left to the discretion of the executive committee.

The following are abstracts of the papers read at the meeting:

*The Sources of Coleridge's Philosophy:* NORMAN WILDE.

Coleridge represents the Platonic tradition of English philosophy, as illustrated by the Cambridge men of the seventeenth century, and was only externally influenced by German philosophy, which helped him to formulate but did not contribute his ideas. The fundamental characteristic of his mind was his imagination, and his place in philosophy was that of a metaphysical poet.

*The Moral Will:* J. D. STOOPS.

The inherited action-patterns are the only sources from which can come the energy of volition. The will varies with the strength and organization of instinctive predispositions. Traditional ethics has estranged the will from these primitive action-patterns. But to build one's idols independently of instinctive predispositions is to leave in the mind subconscious trends whose suppression consumes the vital energies which ought to enlarge and not limit the will. The good will no less than the evil will receives its energies from instinctive predispositions. The good will is not an introverted will; it is an integrated will. Through integration the entire repertoire of instincts and emotions, organized by the reason, lends its momentum to the frailest aspiration. Rationalism, intuitionism, individualism have estranged the will from the older action-patterns which can alone furnish the outlines of the individual's relations to social institutions. The instincts of food, sex, gregariousness, workmanship, curiosity, play, do not limit the rational, moral will. They are the only possible conditions of its enlargement. Property, the family, the state, religion, vocation, knowledge, art, are rationalized expressions of innate action-patterns. A will which does not function with intelligence and loyalty in all these spheres of conduct is not an adequately developed moral will.

*The Doctrine of the Good of the Whole:* J. H. FARLEY.

Value or goodness is always a teleological affair. The wholeness is a matter of the realm of ends, in reference to and in contrast with

which the factors of experience are immanently related. It can not be a fusion unity, an absolute fulfilment, a super-experiential fact, or a good throughout. It must be a good with which all evil and good experiences are vitally related, but related in the sense that at any moment of time evil is essential in the achieving struggle for the good. In it the evil and the good are not a series of absolutely necessary events. Achievement is a fact and without it there is no good of the whole. Again, it is not a good from which all evil is excluded, nor is it a self-sufficient whole independent of finite experience. It is a perfection only in the sense that there is a necessary order of experience which makes all good possible, such as the inseparable connection of good and evil, the necessity of a teleological order, the necessity of a unity between ideal ends and contrast elements which hold the ends in adoration, and the necessity of an ideal immanence of the highest with the lowest values. There is thus at any and all times a necessary order or form than which, considering all facts, nothing can be preferred, because without such good the highest values would have no meaning. The good of the whole is not a perfection in which to change one could only change for the worse, but a perfection in the sense that, considering all that is and has been, it is at any moment the most perfect. It is an order which expresses an ideal of perfection, a conceivable arrangement of factors of experience which is the most perfect organization of details, and hence the ideally perfect, but which, on the other hand, can never be tested out except by trial and error experience.

In short, perfection of the whole therefore includes, (1) a necessary and therefore a perfect order without which goodness could not exist; (2) a level of achievement which may alter but at any moment of time is the best, considering the actually cooperating factors; (3) an idealization of what ought to be, considering the rise of new factors and impulses and considering the most detailed distribution of beneficial goods to the persons of any given period. It inevitably includes the ill of the parts. This seems psychologically necessary, whether or no one subscribes to the logical contention of the absolute idealists like Royce and Bradley or Bosanquet, that "ill in the temporal order is the condition of the perfection of the external order" and "the absolute is the richer for every discord and for all the diversity which it embraces." In some sense all must be included, yet it must allow for degrees of appreciation of the good, complete absence of appreciation and also annihilation of the apparent individual good. Indeed, the good of the whole must always seem quite external and foreign to some, though the aim of a democracy and of Christianity is to develop to the maximum the appreciation on the part of each of such a good. In any case, antag-

onism to the good of the whole, sacrifice for the good of the whole, and annihilation of the individual good are a foundation order of experience. Indeed, it seems to be this fact of experience that many have translated into the life of the absolute.

*The Ethics of Possession:* E. JORDAN.

The characterization of the present as a practical age seems to imply that all interpretations of value must be put in terms of material things. This is the case whether the question is approached from the standpoint of common life activities as instanced in business, or of formulated "common sense" as expressed in law, or of theory as expressed in political thought. But either individual or group action based on the property idea of value produces results just the opposite of those we claim to intend.

The question would then seem to be whether property or possession can be made the basis of human order. Analysis of accepted facts indicates that possession may be basic to a social order, but the order arrived at is the new order of cooperative or community good, since the attempt to produce any other good is disruptive of all order.

It then follows that possession as the basis of an order is a "natural right" of the order, in that it implies a shared use and enjoyment or control and disposal of goods on the part of all persons. It appears further that the right to possess is not "natural" to the individual, either as expressing through law (as law at present stands) his intelligence or feeling, or as representing tradition or God.

Hence the ethical end is a cooperative *common* wealth, or an intelligently planned and esthetically purposed state or status. This end determines the objectivity and authority of moral judgments. But the end develops through growth in complexity and quality of personal relations, so that standards must be flexible, different from present standards in law, politics, *etc.*, which were designed for conditions radically different from those of the present.

It is doubtful whether existing ethical systems supply such standards, so criticism of the theory which is supposed to support existing institutions is the need of the present. It is suggested that criticism will break with the individualism that is dominant in institutions as now organized, and will follow social lines of direction.

*The Problem of Philosophic Methodology in the Light of the War:*  
A. E. AVEY.

For philosophy the method of procedure in the interpretation of things is constituted not by rules of operation of mechanical apparatus, but by the assumption of an attitude of mind. The success of

results depends largely upon the character of this original attitude. Hence the necessity of avoiding a bias which necessarily cuts off part of a possible and desirable result. It is on this problem as working out a factor appearing first as a mental attitude, developing into a system of values, and finally into action with social, national, and international significance that the interest of this paper centers. Whatever throws light upon the problem is relevant to the discussion; and the war has thrown some light.

The war has frequently been regarded as a clash of philosophies, and may therefore be regarded as a clash of mental attitudes or philosophic methodologies. The fundamental positive feature of the Teutonic philosophy is utilitarian and materialistic. It manifested itself before the war in the economic and financial policies within Germany and led to conditions which made necessary the exploitation of other nations for the advantage of German investors. The whole policy of Germany seems a living embodiment of Schopenhauer's description of the movement of the will in its commonsense and practical scientific phases. It is an exploitation of all things in the interest of an end which lies ever beyond. It discovers nothing worth while in and for itself. Small nations have no intrinsic value. Large nations have only negative value because they are not subject to Teutonic exploitation.

In contrast to this, the noteworthy feature of the attitude of American and Allied leaders of thought is the championing of the rights of small nations as possessing value for their own sakes. In this we see the appreciation of the other half of Schopenhauer's philosophy, a factor of attitude characteristic of the artist in his appreciation of the value of the insignificant, *e. g.*, in still life, and in phases of fact possessed of no practical or mercantile value.

This factor of esthetic appreciation which seems so noticeably absent on the one side and present on the other offers promise of saving western civilization from the predicament into which the Teutonic philosophy has led it. It is the one factor of attitude which gives promise of salvation for the purely cultural values in experience.

It should therefore be explicitly incorporated into philosophic method. It is an indispensable factor of attitude without which a satisfactory system of philosophical values can not be attained. The nature of esthetic experience should be more seriously and carefully studied. It should not be set aside as something purely subjective; the social consequences of its presence or absence are too marked to allow its being dealt with thus lightly.

*Ethics and Social Reconstruction: E. L. SCHAUB.*

The possibilities of ethics in the way of formulating definite programmes of social reconstruction are decidedly limited. Even in the life of the individual the principles developed by ethics afford but little guidance, and that not merely because of their abstractness but because moral perplexities frequently find their solution only in a process by which the individual comes to know himself, to interpret his "various selves" each to the others. Programmes of social reconstruction also involve the application of general principles to objective conditions. But, further, they must achieve a reconciliation of principles or view-points and, what is even more difficult, a genuine agreement of persons and groups. For the conflicts which underlie the necessity and the demand for social reconstruction are almost invariably a clash of what are conceived as rights as well as interests. How may these conflicts be resolved? Perhaps through strife, inasmuch as this may eventuate not merely in the triumph of the one party but also in the general adoption of its view-point, ideals, and programme. But unless and until there is such free and full, as well as general, acceptance, the process of social reconstruction, even in the respect in question, has not reached completion. What further method is available? Only that of a mutual interpretation through which each party acquires a measure of insight into all the divergent attitudes and interests, together with some appreciation of their elements of justification and value, and that of a mutual give and take until, through progressive modifications of each in the presence of all, a basis of common life and good-will is not *thought* out but, very literally, *worked* out.

Ethicists of opposed camps not infrequently agree as to social programme, ethical "brethren" have been known to be at odds in matters of practical social import; many, if not all "ethicists" accept such general principles of action as the Golden Rule; medical, legal, and even professorial associations develop their standards and codes through committees of their own and not through the employment of a professional "ethicist." Does not all of this suggest that much may be said in substantiation of a realistic standpoint such as that of Hegel?

Yet, even though it be measurably true that "we live forward; we think backward," as three such divergent philosophers as Hegel, Kierkegard, and James alike maintained, ethical reflection operates (1) through its influence upon the intellect and character of the individual, and (2) through disentangling from their concrete expressions the principles actually worked out in the various spheres of social relations and, with their aid, disclosing the basal nature of the conflicts that arise elsewhere, with some suggestion as to the possible

general direction of their solution, thus assisting in bringing every organization of human activity to the level of that specific one whose particular historical development has been such as to make it, in the respect in question, of greater desirability.

*Intellectual Reconstruction after the War:* C. E. AYRES.

1. The precarious situation in which modern society finds itself has been shown to be due in large part to the discrepancy between our machine technology and our institutional arrangements. Since the latter rest upon social habituation they have naturally failed to keep pace with the very rapid development of the technological process.

2. There can be, in the nature of the case, only two methods of remedying the situation: (*a*) by the reconstruction of the institutional order to make it fit the technological situation; (*b*) by slowing down the development of the machine technique to make possible this adaptation of our social arrangements to the newer state of the industrial arts.

3. Not only is (*a*) the method universally recommended, but any proposal along the line of (*b*) is repelled in all quarters. Professional students naturally unite in condemnation of any plan for retrenchment in those sciences upon which the continued rapid development of the machine technique depends. Philosophy has unintentionally complicated this situation through its theory of absolute truth with the correlative notion of the inviolability of every specific attempt at communion with the absolute truth.

4. This situation can be relieved only by a clear realization that since truth is contingent upon meaning, and since meaning is determined by context, the truth of every research is conditioned by the circumstances under which it is carried on.

5. Only such a conception of truth as will bring a full understanding of the meaning of that scientific truth the discovery of which serves only to accelerate technological progress, can render any proposal to limit such researches, in the interest of the general welfare, available to society.

*The Democratization of Jehovah:* E. D. STARBUCK.

(Abstract not furnished.)

*Art and the Democracy:* H. B. ALEXANDER.

(Presidential address, to be published in full.)

*The Persistent Problems of Philosophy:* B. H. BODE.

(Published in full, this JOURNAL, Vol. XV., pp. 167-177.)

*Bode's Conception of Consciousness: H. W. WRIGHT.*

According to Bode, consciousness reveals the outcome of the relatively unorganized responses of any moment before they become overt. By selecting and exalting that particular response which promises to forward the business of the moment, consciousness re-directs behavior in the interests of future consequences. It is a future adaptation that has been set to work to bring about its own realization. Hence the meaning of all conscious objects without exception reflects the anticipated outcome of nascent motor responses. Relative to this theory, my purpose is to show: The motor responses of the living individual do establish the existence of perceived objects as stimuli affecting his organism. The meaning of such objects is also constituted in part by anticipations (in ideal imagery) of the completion of incipient motor responses, which serve to locate the object with reference to the percipient, giving it position in his world of determinate spatial relations. But the meaning of conscious objects also includes qualities whose characteristic differences can not be resolved into variations of anticipated motor response. They can not because (on Bode's own theory) consciousness is essentially selective and selection is made not among anticipated variations of motor activity, but among anticipated satisfactions whose values depend upon their qualitative diversity. If it is said that these qualitative differences reduce upon reflection to diverging lines of motor activity still further projected into the future, the reply is that such programmes of behavior can become alternatives for conscious choice only in so far as they are concerned as leading eventually to qualitatively different satisfactions. It is impossible therefore to maintain the selective character of consciousness without admitting also a variety of qualitatively different interests or satisfactions through choice, among which the individual expresses himself as conscious subject.

*On the Nature of our Knowledge of the Physical World: R. W. SELLARS.*

Our task is to make reasonably clear just what knowledge of the physical world should mean to one who maintains that it can not be apprehended and who is yet not an agnostic. The attempt will be more at explication than at demonstration, the concern being with the implications of principles and conclusions which we have elsewhere defended.

Philosophy made a serious mistake in putting the query, *What can we know, conscious states or physical things?*—before the query, *What is the nature and content of knowledge?* We must

needs come to some clear idea of what knowledge consists in before we can decide what objects are open to it.

Knowledge supervenes upon the reality known. To know an object is not to form it, but to think it as it is apart from the mind. There appears to be a growing unanimity among realists upon this point.

But the presentations which for common sense constitute the physical reality and which are apprehended turn out to be *subjective*, that is, functions of the organisms as stimulated by its physical environment. The mind affirms these presentations to be the physical reality, and gives them an interpretation and setting corresponding to this affirmation. But critical reflection refuses to assent to this naïve realism.

The presentations must be considered the *material* of critical knowledge, the means to knowledge of an unapprehensional sort. Thus enlightened knowledge is a product of mental activity working upon the material given to the mind in observation. Such material suggests and falls into typical categories, in terms of which we are ultimately compelled to think of the physical world.

#### *The Division of Judgments: R. C. LODGE.*

In dividing judgments, modern logicians tend to accept one of three standpoints: (1) Judgment is one and indivisible, without specific differentiation; (2) judgments differ as the objective relations apprehended differ; (3) the judging process varies from the superficial to the profound, or from the crude to the efficient, and in this process we can recognize certain typical *stages*. Modern logic thus recognizes no *logical* division of judgments; for (2) is ultimately a distinction of *objects*, and (3) is subjective and psychological. Most modern logicians try to unite (2) with (3).

Let us avoid the reproach of dualism, and adopt (3). It is the relative proportion of sensory and intellectual elements which determines the various stages of the process. We accordingly recognize:

Stage 1. Judgments of Perception (It is warm; this tree is taller than that).

Stage 2. Judgments of Experience (A thick rug prevents chilblains; children are a joy).

Stage 3. Symbolic Judgments ( $x^2 - y^2 = (x + y)(x - y)$ ; Socrates was put to death for political reasons).

Stage 4. Transcendent Judgments (I am the master of my fate; things in themselves are unknowable).

All four types represent stages in a single process varying from

the more sensory to the more intellectual, and including all types of thought.

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## REVIEWS AND ABSTRACTS OF LITERATURE.

*Philosophical Essays in Honor of James Edwin Creighton.* By FORMER STUDENTS. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1917. Pp. xii + 356.

The best evidence of a teacher's influence is not the acclaim of his students but the character and spirit of their work. The dominant note of the present volume is, on the whole, breadth of view; which is but the motive of justice and conscientiousness. If this is, as we believe, the quality most needed in philosophy, and particularly in American philosophy to-day, Professor Creighton's teaching has been and is of the highest possible service to serious thinking. In one way, it must be admitted, the essays fail to realize fully the spirit which animates them: they are so many that each must needs be too short for thorough discussion of fundamental points. Nevertheless the papers are careful and painstaking, as a rule; particularly those concerned with historical and idealistic topics. To select certain ones of the twenty-two for detailed comment and neglect the rest, would but evince the reviewer's personal preference; and certainly all the papers deserve to be carefully perused by those interested in their subjects. The first seven are concerned with historical topics—Spinoza, Hume, Hegel, *etc.*—and are devoted to the correction of one-sided interpretations hitherto prevalent. We learn that Spinoza was not the rigid and narrow mathematicist of tradition, but was great enough to anticipate, however confusedly, something of the platform of modern idealism. "The great fault of a mediocre thinker usually is that, having been born with a capacity for only the narrowest vision, he hits upon some one category or set of categories. . . . Spinoza's fault was plainly the opposite" (p. 2). "Spinoza . . . comes nearer to Hegel's own organic view than Hegel ever admits" (p. 38). Nor was Hume a mere empiricist: "Hume's skepticism is not the inevitable result of empiricism; it is the consequence of developing an empirical method and judging the outcome by a rationalistic standard" (p. 44). Kant's freedom was quite one-sided; in his system "freedom becomes a defiantly resigned consciousness of determinism" (p. 68), Vedantism, too, with its many sorts of idealism, is a richer philosophy than western thinkers are accustomed to suppose.